

February 13, 2013
Appropriations Committee Testimony
Legislative Office Building, Room 2702
Hartford, CT 06106

I am writing this letter in support of keeping the STRIVE program in the Department of Labor Budget. The STRIVE program has been a staple in the community for over 12 years with over 1300 graduates out of which 70% has gone on to become REEMPLOYED.

Personally, ever since I left State employment in 1995 it has been a nightmare to pull my employability from the ashes or feel confident enough to convince an employer that I should be hired. After taking the course in New Haven, I was able to confidently express my many years of experience in fields ranging from a News Cameraman in 70's, a correction officer in the 80's, a performing artist/instructor in the 90's to present in 45 seconds. I graduated on 8/19/11, my first interview one hour after the ceremony lasted three hours, we just had a pleasant conversation, which ended with, ".....oh you're hired but, I do have to asked you some questions.....".

Point being there have been many of us that have come to the doors of STRIVE, broken and feeling hopeless and have graduated with a renewed energy, purpose as well as tangible interviewing skills. I have seen young men & women recently released from jail or prison with no ability to correctly fill out that LEGAL DOCUMENT called THE APPLICATION develop in weeks into employable, I have hope in my pocket, confidence on my shoulders and s STRIVE CERTIFICATE in my hands walk out of here with a new sense of determination. This is a lean budgeted program with a proven track record of success. There are approximately 900 employed STRIVE grads that could very well have been 900 hopeless feeling unemployed. YOU KNOW WHAT THAT COMBINATION USUALLY EQUATES TO!!

Sincerely,



Inara Ramin

475 Winthrop Avenue

New Haven, CT. 06511

203-999-3111